

Intensive Interaction is a practical approach to interacting with people with learning disabilities and/or autism who do not find it easy communicating or being social (British Institute of Learning Disabilities 2004). The approach focuses on developing the Fundamentals of Communication - the communication concepts and performances that basically precede speech development: enjoying being with another person, developing the ability to attend, concentration and attention span, learning to do sequences of activity with another person, taking turns, sharing personal space, using and understanding eye contacts, facial expressions, physical contacts, nonverbal communication and vocalisations with meaning and learning to regulate and control arousal levels (Nind & Hewett 2005). These fundamentals are based on similar developmental process that babies go through with their carers during the first and second year of their lives.

When we adopt Intensive Interaction as an approach we adopt a particular interactive style. In our interactions with our communication partners we use available look and body, positioning, tuning in / observing, relaxed style and enjoyment. We are unhurried and don't drive on, we use pauses and waiting, we don't do too much, we are responsive in many ways and we join in and imitate the other person. And finally we find the right moment to develop, build and extend (see Hewett 2012). Intensive Interaction sessions should always be playful and enjoyable for both partners.

Shooting videos is an essential tool in Intensive Interaction. Practitioners are recommended to collect videos of interactions with each learner on a weekly basis (Barber 2012). The main purpose of collecting video evidence of interactions is to use it to assist in the recognition of progress over time. The videos also enable practitioners to take advantage of their own experiences: learning what not to do as much as what to do, what types of responses intrigue the learner and which responses seem to encourage the persons they are supporting to explore the situation (Barber 2012).

Practitioners may develop their interactive style either by reflecting their own interaction by themselves or through guided reflection with a mentor. Mentor is a person who has more knowledge and experience in Intensive Interaction. During mentoring process practitioners learn through the mediation of a more experienced mentor in areas that are in their capacity: within their 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky 1978).

In our presentation we shall describe how we have used video to support practitioners to develop their interaction skills with the persons with complex communication needs. Our mentoring style is a combination of principles used in Intensive Interaction, Video Interaction Guidance (VIG); (Kennedy, Landor & Todd 2011), Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP); (Kennedy, Landor & Todd 2011) and our own OIVA Interaction Model (Burakoff & Martikainen 2015).

Core elements in our mentoring style are: using video for shared review and discussion, highlighting moments of successful use of interactive style of Intensive Interaction, adopting a non-blaming approach and widening the focus on competences and being willing to understand things from new perspective (see Silhanova & Sancho 2011). In the relationship both practitioner and mentor when working together are trying to achieve mutual understanding. This mutual understanding is activated through dialogue, which is the main tool to support learning, reflecting and scaffolding new meanings.

## References

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